



Third Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

33 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable D. James Walding
Speaker*



VOL. XXXII No. 43B - 8:00 p.m., THURSDAY, 14 JUNE, 1984.

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**Thirty-Second Legislature****Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Hon. Andy	Springfield	NDP
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BANMAN, Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BLAKE, David R. (Dave)	Minnedosa	PC
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
BUCKLASCHUK, Hon. John M.	Gimli	NDP
CARROLL, Q.C., Henry N.	Brandon West	IND
CORRIN, Q.C., Brian	Ellice	NDP
COWAN, Hon. Jay	Churchill	NDP
DESJARDINS, Hon. Laurent	St. Boniface	NDP
DODICK, Doreen	Riel	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	IND
DOLIN, Hon. Mary Beth	Kildonan	NDP
DOWNEY, James E.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Hon. Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
EYLER, Phil	River East	NDP
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	PC
FOX, Peter	Concordia	NDP
GOURLAY, D.M. (Doug)	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Harry	Virden	PC
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry M.	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HEMPHILL, Hon. Maureen	Logan	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd	Portage la Prairie	PC
JOHNSTON, J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Hon. Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
MACKLING, Q.C., Hon. Al	St. James	NDP
MALINOWSKI, Donald M.	St. Johns	NDP
MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin-Russell	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
NORDMAN, Rurik (Ric)	Assiniboia	PC
OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald	Pembina	PC
PAWLEY, Q.C., Hon. Howard R.	Selkirk	NDP
PARASIUK, Hon. Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PENNER, Q.C., Hon. Roland	Fort Rouge	NDP
PHILLIPS, Myrna A.	Wolseley	NDP
PLOHMAN, Hon. John	Dauphin	NDP
RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Burrows	NDP
SCHROEDER, Hon. Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SCOTT, Don	Inkster	NDP
SHERMAN, L.R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
SMITH, Hon. Muriel	Osborne	NDP
STEEN, Warren	River Heights	PC
STORIE, Hon. Jerry T.	Flin Flon	NDP
URUSKI, Hon. Bill	Interlake	NDP
USKIW, Hon. Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, Hon. D. James	St. Vital	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 14 June, 1984.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE (Cont'd)

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Order please. The question before the House is the motion to go into Supply.

The Honourable Member for Pembina has 40 minutes.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take my opportunity this Session to rise on a matter of grievance. My grievance deals with some of the legislative mistakes this government has already made that are now coming to the attention of us in opposition and, as well, it has to be coming to the attention of government members.

I think it's important, Sir, at this time in this stage of this government's life that legislative mistakes that they've made in the past that are coming to light should be made known so that this government can't continue to bring in bad legislation that is going to adversely affect individual Manitobans such as their past record to date demonstrates has happened.

The amendments I'm going to refer to were to The Summary Convictions Act passed in the Session of 1982, as the affected convictions under The Highway Traffic Act offences and for the collection of parking tickets in the Province of Manitoba.

Before I start, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put on the record that I do concur with comments made by the MLA for Churchill this afternoon where he condemned the Schreyer administration in their handling of Northern Development. He said never before was the system set up in this province whereby Manitoba firms could take full advantage of Northern Development. That was a mistake and they were a government that was going to remedy it, so that Northern Manitobans, so Manitoba firms, could participate in the construction of major Hydro projects in Northern Manitoba.

When he said that, Sir, he was not condemning this side of the House because in our four years of government we never undertook any construction in Northern Manitoba on the Nelson River because the markets were not strongly identified. It was the Schreyer Government that built Long Spruce, Jenpeg, and other works in Northern Manitoba. It was the Schreyer administration that acted wrongly and not in the benefit of Manitoba according to the MLA for Churchill, and I agree with him, Sir.

I want the record to further show that when we were in our negotiations of the Western Power Grid, and the Aluminum Company of Canada negotiations, that is exactly the process that we were undertaking, consultation with contractors and others in the hope that we could have them fully participate in these major developments in Manitoba. I'm pleased to see that this government has carried on with an initiative that was established under my colleague, the Honourable Don Craik, when he had some responsibility in the previous administration. I concur with his condemnation of the

Schreyer handling of Northern Development, and I concur with him carrying on with the process that we had started and put in place.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, as I say, deal with a legislative boondoggle that was given to us by the Attorney-General and amendments to The Summary Convictions Act. Now this may not seem terribly important to government members, and it may not seem important enough for one to exercise as once-a-Session right to grieve against the government, but I think this demonstrates, and what I'm going to say this evening on The Summary Convictions Act amendments shows the legislative inadequacy and bungling of this government. It further shows their incompetence to deal with even the smallest of matters which require legislative change and some thought into the process of what they're doing, Sir. I think it's important at this juncture in the history of this province that the incompetence of the government, in terms of their legislative performance, should be pointed out because this government is taking and claiming to negotiate on our behalf for future generations of Manitobans. And I simply ask you, Sir, given their legislative bungling, are we now to assume that they are the "Golden Boys" of negotiations with international power companies, and they are going to make a good deal for Manitobans when they can't even amend legislation properly and with forethought in Manitoba? I suggest, Sir, no. I offer to you, as an example, the bungling, the mishandling, the incompetent manner, and the insensitive manner in which this government attempted to amend the Constitution in Manitoba. Is that the kind of government negotiations that is going to shine so well for future generations of Manitobans in these major Hydro sales? It's not a good example, it's not a good past record that we can refer to that this government has succeeded in and has been good negotiators. So I bring this to the attention of members in the hopes that maybe they will ask some questions in caucus and in Cabinet to make sure that this government does not further ruin the future of Manitoba.

Now, Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks I've been asking the Minister of Highways and Transportation certain questions as to what the implications are for Manitobans who are prosecuted or charged with failing to wear their seat belts, who are charged with failing to have their headlights on, according to his new amendment. The answers I've been getting are confused a little but not necessarily giving factual information.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I had considered making this a matter of privilege before the House, but I was some seven days in getting to the bottom of it and no doubt, Sir, you would have ruled it out of order because it wasn't brought up at the first opportunity. But I asked the Minister if a person could lose their driver's licence for failing to wear their seat belt? - and he said no, there are no demerit points. He's correct in that there are no demerit points, but he's incorrect in saying Manitobans can't lose their driver's licence

because they can. And they can lose their driver's licence for failing to wear their seat belt under provisions passed in the 1982 Session which amended The Summary Convictions Act.

Now the Minister also said, in his answer of Tuesday, June 5th, to me when I asked him how many driver's licences have been suspended? Here's his answer. He said, "When the fines haven't been paid and so on, that is a matter that the honourable members knows full well has been in place for a number of years. Certainly when he was the Minister of Highways," meaning myself, Sir, and it was the case at that time, "he made to my understanding no move to change that particular system that was in place at that time. If he did, he can clarify that to the House, Mr. Speaker." Mr. Speaker, that's not factual and that was what my matter of privilege was going to centre around because the system has changed, it has changed dramatically since I was Minister of Highways and Transportation, and it was changed by the Attorney-General and the Minister of Highways and Transportation in this government.

Because under the old system, if you failed to pay a speeding ticket - and I'll use that as an example - there was a process by which you had an ex-parte trial. The arresting officers, the summoning officers, had to be present at the court to give evidence to the judge so that they could find the driver guilty in an ex-parte trial. From there on the process proceeded through notification of the driver and time to pay the fine, and if you failed to, then eventually his driver's licence could be suspended. But under the old system, Sir, that suspension only lasted as long as it took to work off the fine and cost at the rate of 50 cents per day. So if you had a \$25 fine and costs, it took you 50 days; and if you paid no fine and you chose not to, your driver's licence would be reinstated in 50 days. What the Attorney-General did in 1982 was change The Summary Convictions Act. He allowed default convictions to become part of the highway traffic enforcement system in the Province of Manitoba for the first time in its history. Default convictions under The Summary Convictions Act are guilty until proven innocent, the exact converse of common law.

Sir, under this new system the police officers who have given the ticket do not have to be at the court. If you are not there to plead your case on that day that your court date has been set on the summons, and you have not paid your fine, it is an automatic default conviction and you are found guilty, and the police don't have to be there to prove their case, or give evidence, or stand up to questioning by the magistrate. Then you go through the process of a letter, and your licence is suspended by a given date. Sir, the suspension is permanent, there is no 50 cents a day remission of the fine, it is permanent. If you do not pay a \$20 fine and costs for failing to wear a seat belt, Sir, you could lose your driver's licence permanently in the Province of Manitoba. That was given to us by the Attorney-General, this libertarian, this civil libertarian gave us that kind of draconian amendments to The Summary Convictions Act to make Manitobans who didn't wear their seat belt criminals permanently barred from driving in the Province of Manitoba. Now isn't that some kind of a caring, and open, and feeling government that this incompetent group attempts to portray to the people of Manitoba.

The Minister of Highways stands up and says there's been no change to the system. Sir, he did not know his own legislation, and his own act when he said that. Now I suggest, and I do not suggest for one minute, Sir, that he tried to mislead this House. I just believe he doesn't know anything that goes on in this department, that he's completely ignorant of what is in The Summary Convictions Act and how traffic offences are prosecuted in this province. That lack of knowledge is dangerous, Sir, especially for a Minister of the Crown.

In debate yesterday on his latest amendments to The Highway Traffic Act the Minister did not even know what was in his own bill. He didn't know that there was a clause in there that would essentially cause antique car owners to modify their vehicles to comply with his legislation. He didn't even know it was in there, Sir. He had to ask me, not knowing the rules, what section of the bill it was in. Of course, I couldn't tell him because you can't deal with sections in second reading. He knows not the system of the House, he knows not what legislation he's bringing in, he doesn't know what legislation is governing his department. He is an incompetent Minister, and he has helped, and aided, and abetted daily by being surrounded by incompetent Ministers, including the Attorney-General who brought in The Summary Convictions Act.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to you a case that came to my attention just this week. A young man in Morden finds out that his driver's licence is suspended if he doesn't pay a fine by June 30th. It turns out when he gets to the bottom of it that his brother was in Brandon, got caught speeding, and did not have a driver's licence. The RCMP officer phoned in, had the computer check done because this young man who got caught speeding gave his brother's name and birthdate. The RCMP officer made the computer check, found out it was indeed a valid driver's licence, wrote up the ticket without any cross checking to make sure that the person was who he said he was, Sir. The registered letter came out, because naturally the man didn't know he had a speeding ticket. He got a default conviction because he wasn't there and he didn't pay the fine. He wasn't there to plead not guilty. He got the registered letter in the mail, but unfortunately his father picked up the registered mail. His brother saw the letter and I don't know what happened to it, but this young man never got the letter. The next one he did get had him suspended, suspended, Sir, and he didn't know it. Had something happened to that second letter and he was out driving his car believing that he was completely insured, he would be a non-insured driver. This is what the Attorney-General has given us in this system, this very easy system of prosecuting Manitobans and it is not a good system.

Now you have to appreciate, Sir, that this young man in Morden really was caught in a quandry. He phoned the Motor Vehicle Branch, he phoned the Attorney-General's Department and he even phoned the Ombudsman, Sir. You know what the advice was that he got in all three cases from the Motor Vehicle Branch, from the Attorney-General's Department and from the Ombudsman? He indicates to me that they all told him to pay the fine, take the demerits and we'll straighten it out after. In other words, to solve his problem he was to plead guilty to something he didn't do. What

kind of a system of justice have we evolved in Manitoba with this Attorney-General when that is what you do?

I told him not to pay that fine and within 24 hours, thanks to some confident people in the Attorney-General's Department and some competent people in the Motor Vehicle Branch, we got it straightened out. That conviction has been quashed and reversed, and the young man is not faced with having his driver's licence suspended, he's not faced with having to pay a fine and then recover it later, and he's not faced with additional demerit points which will be put on his licence and taken off later. But what a bizarre situation and it's given to us by the Attorney-General, and this Minister of Highways doesn't know it's there and that the system is operating wrong. — (Interjection) — well, his brother, indeed some brother.

But I want to tell my friend the MLA from Brandon East - some police officer. Can you feature a police officer saying: who are you? The person gives him a name and a birth date. He checks and sees it's a valid driver's licence and he doesn't ask him for a single other piece of identification. This is a police officer.

What your amendments have done, ladies and gentlemen, which I'm trying to point out to you, is you have made the operation of the police system much much easier. They don't have to care about checking every detail and being absolutely correct because, remember, under the fault conviction, the RCMP doesn't even have to be in court to prove their case. It has made this amendment from this Attorney-General, this civil libertarian has turned this into a police state where the police don't have to check anything out. I can't conceive of an RCMP officer - and I have a great deal of confidence in the RCMP, but unfortunately this officer has made a mistake on this one in my opinion, because he didn't check to see that the person was who he said he was.

Besides that, to make it even more bizarre — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, the MLA from Brandon East says it doesn't have anything to do with the piece of legislation. I just said it does because the RCMP officer, the City of Winnipeg police officer does not have to be in court to prove his case. The default conviction that you have given them under The Summary Convictions Amendments, which you are a part of a government that brought in, allows that to happen, yet the police officer doesn't have to be in court. Can't you see the problem you have created? It's as plain as the nose on your face, you've got a problem here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the driver, who said he was his brother, is 6'2", 210 lbs., brown hair, brown eyes. The brother whose licence he used is 5'10", 140 lbs., blonde hair and blue eyes. The RCMP officer didn't even take the check of the information that's on your driver's licence to make sure that it was the right person. That is the problem. You have made it too easy for the police to charge people, just ordinary Manitobans with highway traffic violations and make the charge stick, because they don't have to appear in court, etc., etc. I do not believe that that is the right way for us to be proceeding.

What makes it even more frustrating is that last week the Attorney-General, in responding to questions from my colleague the MLA for St. Norbert, who pointed out the increase in break-ins in the City of Winnipeg over the last several years and asked the Attorney-

General if he would consider imposing heavier sentences in an effort to deter break and entry; the Attorney-General got up in his very best act and said, well, we would not want to ever admit that increasing the punishment reduced crime.

Yet, Sir, in The Summary Convictions Act he has dreadfully increased the ability to punish innocent Manitobans. It would appear to me, and this is a simple analogy, and it's subject to challenge by anybody over in the opposite side that wants to do it, it would seem to me that the Attorney-General is more interested in making it easy for the criminal and very difficult for the average law-abiding Manitoban who happens to run afoul of the law for not buckling up their seat belt.

He wants to hit the average peaceable Manitoban hard and let the criminal go with less punishment. Mr. Speaker, I find that totally objectionable that he would stand up and grandstand to the television camera that increasing the punishment would not reduce the crime when he has increased the punishment many fold to ordinary offenders of The Highway Traffic Act.

Mr. Speaker, the real unworkable part of this amendment to The Summary Convictions Act - I've given you a problem in ordinary highway traffic offences, but the real lulu, comes in when the section deals with a parking violations. Remember this was brought in primarily so that the City of Winnipeg and other jurisdictions could collect parking fines that are in arrears.

They did it by allowing the default conviction on the parking fine and the automatic suspension of the driver's licence if that parking ticket wasn't paid. It sounded good. I disagreed with it when he brought it in. Sounds good, let's go. The government was all gung ho to do this. They've got the parking ticket problem solved. But, Sir, I ask the Attorney-General, I ask the Minister of Highways, have any drivers' licences been suspended? The answer is no. Are there any that should be? Up to 9,000 to 10,000 should be, Sir, and not one driver has been suspended.

I am informed that the reason why is, that you take and issue a parking ticket, you take the licence number of the car down, the licence plate number, you run the computer check and it identifies John Smith as the owner of that car, but there are thousands of John Smiths in Manitoba. Which John Smith's driver's licence do you suspend for this parking ticket with a car owned by John Smith?

You know - here's where I have to quote back something that the Attorney-General said. In closing his remarks when he introduced the amendments to The Summary Convictions Act, he said, "In concluding" - this is the Attorney-General, Sir, "my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I should acknowledge the assistance my department has received from the City of Winnipeg Police Department, the RCMP and the Office of the Chief Provincial Judge. I commend this bill to the House."

But do you know what he forgot to do? He forgot to consult with the Motor Vehicle Branch that was going to have to administer this bizarre system that he brought in, and the Motor Vehicle Branch was never consulted on this, because they would have told him it's not workable; they would have told him his amendment would not work, but he never consulted with the department of government who is going to have to

enforce this new change to The Summary Convictions Act.

Sir, I ask you, given that kind of performance in legislative change, should we trust this government to do anything anymore in this province? They are incompetent, Sir. They are spendthrifts, they are bad negotiators and they are now even bad legislators. There are some five or six lawyers as part of that caucus. What a group to lead this province, Sir! They are incompetent and it has been demonstrated now in these amendments to The Summary Convictions Act that are coming to our light now.

Mr. Speaker, there's another problem with The Summary Convictions Act, because they say there's a problem in identifying the registered owner with a driver's licence because you may have duplicate names. Fine, I'll accept that, but there is a clause that they added in here that when you accumulate ten or more convictions for parking offences they can cancel the registration on your vehicle. Well, that would be simple to do. Then why aren't they doing it, Sir? Why aren't they doing it? Mainly because now they realize they don't have the political will to do it. They brought in bad legislation that was unworkable. They have a fail-safe from the unworkable part of it and they're not exercising the fail-safe with some 9,000 to 10,000 people involved with parking infractions, not one suspension.

We know of one individual already, Sir, who did not pay a parking fine and his driver's licence is going to be suspended. Talk about justice in this system, Sir. Talk about justice. And pretty soon when people get tickets for not having their headlights on during the prescribed hours, they will get tickets. If they don't pay them for a Mickey Mouse offence like that they're going to lose their driver's licence - and not temporarily for 44 days under the old system, where a \$22 fine would have your licence suspended for 44 days, 50 cents a day, but their driver's licence is suspended forever if they don't pay the fine. Isn't that some kind of punishment to fit the crime, Sir?

It is incredibly bizarre and it's given to us by a former professor of the law, a learned man by his own admission, but a legislative incompetent, Sir, when he hit this House. Not only that, but he chose not to ask the department that was going to enforce these new amendments as to whether it would work.

This government said they were going to listen to Manitobans. They've demonstrated they don't do that, Sir, but surely you must from time to time listen to your civil servants. You pay them to provide you advice, but you don't seek it from them, because you didn't in this case and you've got a hodge-podge of a mess that isn't working.

Mr. Speaker, I know that this does not seem like a incredibly important subject to honourable members opposite, but I think it's an important subject because you can have circumstances - and I pointed them out to the Attorney-General when he brought in The Summary Convictions Act - where if a person is out of the country on business or on holidays and he fails to pay a fine, this process of the summary conviction can have his licence removed without his knowledge that it is removed. That Manitoban could be driving without a driver's licence and if he were involved in an accident and there was a liability suit, I suggest the consequences for that driver, who innocently did not

know his licence was suspended, could be grave indeed. We're talking about drivers who have not offended, in some cases, very serious laws, drivers that don't have their headlights on the half hour after sun-up and the half hour before sundown. That isn't a major crime, Sir, that deserves that kind of punishment, but it's there in The Summary Convictions Act amendments passed by this Attorney-General, passed by this government.

We don't think that that's appropriate and I would urge the Attorney-General and his Cabinet to address this problem, because it is a problem and it's going to be a growing problem. Because, Sir, under this system, I believe that you make the police force, the individual members of the police force, less studious when they write up these traffic violations. As I've demonstrated, there is no way that that young man should have been able to use his brother's name and birth date to get a speeding ticket issued to his brother's driver's licence. The very minimum that that RCMP officer should have done was cross-checked the identification, and that young man did not have any piece of his brother's identification on him to my knowledge.

So you see the problem you've created is you've made it easy to secure convictions against innocent Manitoban drivers who offend The Highway Traffic Act and when you make it easier; i.e., no court appearance by the RCMP or the arresting officers to get the ex-parte conviction under the old system. When you make it easier, you open the system to mistakes and you open the system to abuse, and I don't think that any member in this House wants to do that. I certainly hope that wasn't the intent when the Attorney-General brought this in, but that clearly, Sir, is what is happening and you've got to remember these amendments have only been proclaimed a short while.

These kinds of circumstances will continue to happen in greater and greater numbers, and more and more Manitobans are going to be put upon by this kind of draconian measure in The Summary Convictions Act. That's why Manitobans and citizens in general say, in greater frequency and greater numbers, how did this happen to us? How did we have so many of our freedoms and rights and privileges taken away from us? It was because you've got incompetent legislators such as the Attorney-General and this current group of New Democrats, who are temporarily in office, and you've got unlistening legislators. They do not listen to the problems they're creating. That's a dangerous situation and I suggest that with this kind of a record in The Summary Convictions Act, with this kind of a record behind you, surely some of you people on the back bench must be a little bit concerned with some of the amendments that are being touted as good amendments by the various Ministers and the Attorney-General. I ask you because I know the way the system works, unless you've changed it from when we were government.

Any legislation we brought in often went through the glare of caucus to make sure it was not going to be bad legislation and questions were asked, and if you, as a Minister, did not have the answers, your legislation was stalled in caucus before it did harm to Manitobans. Start asking questions in your back bench about the consequences of some of this legislation. Start asking yourself questions on some of these negotiations that

your government is doing. We can't ask the questions because we don't have the information, but you do. You're on the inside track, you people in the back bench and part of the Cabinet, ask the tough and serious questions not for my benefit, not for the benefit of the Progressive Conservative Opposition, but for the benefit of the people of Manitoba. They don't need any more bad legislation from a bad government. Start asking questions and make them tough questions and don't be intimidated by the fast talk and the stage acting of the Attorney-General because I know he did that to the caucus on the French language amendment. He had you people cowered, so you wouldn't dare speak out about whether it was right, wrong, good, bad or anything. He had you mesmerized like a cobra. He did, and you did nothing about it. And look at what happened to you, as a political entity in this province, but more importantly look at what happened to the citizens of Manitoba? Never before divided on an issue like that in such hard lines, with such strong feelings, and that's but one example of the incompetence of this government.

The Summary Convictions Act amendments are another example of this incompetent government's inability to bring forth worthwhile amendments to our legislation. I ask, on behalf of my colleagues, are any tough questions being asked of the Ministers negotiating the future of this province? I don't think so. You people are so concerned about your political fortunes and your re-election next time, you're like the Joey Smallwood Government in Newfoundland. You saw the writing on the wall and you're willing to do anything. — (Interjection) — Oh, Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend with no brain, the MLA for Inkster, just said that's why we signed bad deals. We didn't sign any deals, Sir. We didn't sign any deals. We signed Letters of Intent, we had negotiations, but, Mr. Speaker, these boys have already tabled a deal which is apparently sealed and delivered. This deal, theoretically, if we believe the Minister of Energy of Mines, is there.

So, Mr. Speaker, when he comes to answer the questions that we're going to pose to him - obviously that haven't been posed by anybody on that side - he's got to have good answers, good answers for the people of Manitoba. If he doesn't then, Mr. Speaker, I fear for a repeat of the Joey Smallwood fiasco, but Joey Smallwood didn't win the election and also the people of Newfoundland didn't win. They were the biggest losers of them all because not enough questions were asked.

And furthermore, to the Member for Inkster, if he reads Hansard in the First Session, he will find his Minister of Energy and Mines actively pursuing and defending the kind of Letters of Intent and agreements that we had in the works. Read Hansard. Now, of course, he's changing his story and he's twisting and turning like a leaf in the wind, but at the time, Sir, he used the negotiations we did in the prospectus of the Province of Manitoba, he talked about the wonderful development that was going to take place and then he blew them all. He blew them all, Sir. Not one of them materialized and now everything is changed, and now we are in the process of seeing some brand new negotiations which, according to the Minister of Energy and Mines, are good for the province. Well, the Alcoa deal will be known as the "sweetheart deal of the

century" - the Province of Manitoba, the taxpayers of Manitoba, putting up 80 percent of the money. Wonderful deal! I mean, who wouldn't go for it? It's a great deal for Alcoa. It's not a good deal, in my estimation, for the people of Manitoba the way this government is negotiating, but we'll get into that.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing, I only want to point out to you, Sir, and to members in the government that they haven't got a very good record to date. They have the worst record of any government at a two-year point in the history of Manitoba. Larger deficits than ever - this province - uncontrollable deficits, Sir, and what is troublesome is this Minister of Finance, who is so quick to the baffle-gab and the acting on television in question period when we sat in this House not two days ago and asked him some very straightforward questions about the Department of Finance, he was completely stupid as to what the department is doing. He had to ask his staff for every simple answer. He knows nothing of the department and that is a shock, Sir, because that's supposedly one of the bright lights in the Pawley Cabinet, and he couldn't answer any questions basic to the Finance Department and the Finance Estimates passed, because why would you keep asking questions of a dud who doesn't have the answers and won't give the answers? He won't share with us where this province is going financially into the future.

So, Mr. Speaker, when you've got a Minister of Finance that doesn't know where this province is going, whether the deficit is controllable - and I point out, for small consideration to my honourable friends over there, the \$1.7 billion estimated profit from the 1993 to 2005, that is three years of NDP deficit. Now, if this gang of incompetents, Sir, governed until 1993 the deficit would probably be \$2 billion or \$3 billion per year. That's the entire profit in six months, the entire estimated profit in six months, that this deal is supposedly going to give Manitobans over a 12-year period, Sir, and at the same time lock us into an irreversible contract, etc., etc.

So don't be mesmerized like the snake charmer by the figures and the numbers and the prospects of re-election because that's bad motivation, that brings in bad legislation which you've already demonstrated you're quite capable of bringing in. That brings in bad negotiated agreements which you're quite capable of bringing in as you did in the French Language amendment. That brings in bad Budgets which you have done consecutively for the last three years, bad Budgets. That brings in bad spending habits which you have done for this province. There is no area that this province can take credit and say they are doing a good job in. Not one, Sir, not one. Their job creation is not there, it is not there, Sir. Despite what they say, it is not there. The Jobs Fund is the "fraud" fund, it is not working.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bad government bringing forth bad legislation, with spending out of control, telling us that a deal that brings profits starting in 1993, which won't even equate over a 12-year period, to their deficit that they've already rung up. You can't tell me, Sir, that these people know what they're doing and that they should be the ones that are negotiating the future of the Province of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, you cannot tell the average Manitobans that these people deserve that kind of office. These people are not fit to govern and

but a small example, Sir, of their incompetence and the way they run roughshod over the bureaucracy in the Department of Highways, the Motor Vehicle Branch, is present for all to see in the amendments to The Summary Convictions Act.

Experts in the Motor Vehicle Branch could have cautioned them two years ago that this was unworkable the way it was written. They never sought out that expert advice because this government doesn't rely on any of the longstanding advice that has been built up through years of experience, professional experience in the bureaucracy. They want to rely on the travelling socialists that they bring in from Saskatchewan, from Ottawa, that have loaded the halls and the offices of this government. The travelling socialists that were kicked out of Saskatchewan have come and provided advice to this government, and it is not good advice they're getting, it is not professional advice they are getting from these travelling socialists, and it is going to get this province into more and more trouble.

I challenge and I, in fact, plead with the back bench to ask some serious questions of these bunglers in the front bench so that you don't do any more incompetent things to further ruin the Province of Manitoba, the province that I was born in, that I'm raising my family in, that my business is located in, and the province that I love, Sir. That's what I'm asking you to do, is think about the Province of Manitoba, the people of Manitoba, and future generations, and try in the back bench, even though you're outnumbered, to bring some semblance of sanity and competence to the front bench if you can. You would go down in history as backbenchers, worthy of being backbenchers, if you would ask some of those questions. But unfortunately I don't think either the ability or the desire is there for the back bench to take on any of these gurus in the front bench, these all-knowing lawyers, teachers and professionals who are now governing the Province of Manitoba.

Sir, I close by asking the government not to bring in any more ill-considered, wrong and incompetent legislation for the sake of Manitobans. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?
The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say, Mr. Speaker, in rising to use my opportunity to place before this House my grievance, the first grievance I've used in my two-and-a-half years in this Assembly, that I find the spectacle today to be nothing short of ridiculous. You know, we have so many issues of concern to people that could be discussed in an intelligent way, so many issues where we could have constructive disagreement between the various parties. There are so many issues out there, and yet today we've heard about bearbaiting. We had a 40 minute grievance on bearbaiting, I mean this is incredible.

We had 40 minutes on God knows what from the Member for Morris. He certainly didn't seem to have a coherent theme.

Then the Member for Pembina getting up, and for 30 minutes talking in a somewhat constructive vein, I will say, about The Summary Convictions Act, and then rambling off into his usual 10 minutes of political rhetoric

at the end which completely took away any of the impact that speech might have had. We've seen that, Mr. Speaker.

A MEMBER: What are we going to get now?

MR. S. ASHTON: What should we be debating? I would suggest we had an announcement today which was worthy of debate. We could have done that in a number of ways; we could have gone into a Committee of Supply. The Minister of Energy and Mines is going to be before a committee. We could have discussed it at that time, we could have. We could have used the grievance mechanism, debate that. Yet I've heard no more than about five minutes of discussion today from members opposite about the 500 megawatt sale, or about the 1,200 megawatt sale which is currently being negotiated, or the Alcoa negotiations, or the Potash negotiations.

A MEMBER: What's your grievance, Steve?

MR. S. ASHTON: Well, someone asked there, what is my grievance about? I suppose to a certain extent I could say it's about grievances, the poor use of grievances in this House. I suppose one could say that. Really, when one looks at it, you know, there are so many restraints built into the system, in the parliamentary system, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek on a point of order.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: No, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the honourable member will permit a question.

MR. S. ASHTON: When I'm finished, Mr. Speaker, I'd be glad to entertain a question from the member opposite.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: As I said, Mr. Speaker, we're so constrained by format in this House; I certainly notice that. We have certain formats for more general discussion, the Throne Speech, and the debate on the Budget. Those are pretty well the only two times that we can do that. There is some latitude within Estimates, although the Member for Burrows is apt to call us out of order if we get too far off the particular topic, so even then we're somewhat constrained. In question period we have to be adhering to a set of rules which require strict adherence to keeping questions relevant, short and non-argumentative. You know, one mechanism which does allow for some greater flexibility is the grievance mechanism, but really, Mr. Speaker, to spend 40 minutes grieving on bearbaiting. Really, Mr. Speaker, to spend 40 minutes.

You know, if my constituents had watched today, I think they would have left in disgust after the first five minutes of hearing the Member for Roblin-Russell. They would have left in disgust because, you know, when they send me here - and in any constituency when they send an MLA here - I think they have certain expectations about what we're going to do when we're

here. I think the first one, Mr. Speaker, is that they expect us to be relevant. Of what we've seen today is the biggest collection of irrelevant ramblings and useless political rhetoric that I've ever seen. In one day I think they've pretty well summed all I've seen in two-and-a-half years. You know, I think if there was an award for the most irrelevant speech it had to go to the Member for Roblin-Russell, the most irrelevant speech I've ever heard, Mr. Speaker, in this House. You know, and I must say I find that saddening because that member is a veteran member, and I suspect what has happened is that perhaps at one time to he did strive for relevancy but he's seen from his colleagues so much irrelevancy, so much political rhetoric, that he felt why not go on bearbaits? Why not go on that? There might be one or two people in my constituency who I can send a copy of Hansard to and keep them happy, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that's probably what ran through his mind. So when I blame him, I don't mean to single him out; but really, I would suggest that what he's doing is rather typical of the approach of members opposite. And really, if you look at the bottom line of it, if you look at the bottom line of what's happening, you know, in whole complete areas of government policy, there is a complete lack of credible opposition.

I would like to speak about one area, the North. Has anybody kept track of the number of questions that members opposite have asked about the North? You don't have to do too much to ask a question, Mr. Speaker.

Today, we had about the first set of questions in this entire Session from members opposite related to the North. Can anybody name me some of the topic areas they have raised of relevance to the North? Can they name even a handful? How about one or two? They can't, Mr. Speaker, because the caucus opposite has raised none, and that's a pretty significant area of the province. We have five seats in the Legislature. We occupy a good proportion of the land in this province. Now we're going to be the base for a lot of the economic development that we're seeing become a reality now. Yet members opposite, they haven't raised any concerns. Now does that mean that everybody in the North is happy, totally happy, that they don't have any concerns? Does it mean that? No, it doesn't.

I talked to people in the North and there are a lot of individual concerns. There have been a lot of ongoing concerns. But if you get to the bottom line, there is a certain amount of alienation we get, and it's days such as this, it's attitudes put forward by members of the opposition which kind of reflect that I think. You know, there's a sense of northern alienation because there's a sense that down here in the city, down here in the south, the people really don't care about the North. They don't know what's going on up in the North. They don't care. I want to get a record of that. Review the index for this Session up to date. Review it. How many questions of relevance to the North? How many issues of relevance?

Review the Estimates of the Minister of Northern Affairs. What was the main topic there? - the personal affairs of the Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs. They spent virtually the entire Estimates on a personality attack, character assassination. You know, the average person in the North, they read that, they'll say, we don't want that, we don't want to see that kind of stuff. We

want to see some discussion on issues of concern to northerners.

You know, there's further evidence of it. It often comes from off the record comments, or heckling, when some of us do attempt to raise issues of concern to the North. I've seen it on a number of occasions. I've heard people say, when I raise concern about the high cost of living in the North, the high cost in a whole series of areas, I've heard people say: "Well, you get all those northern allowances, what are you complaining about?" I've heard that from several members opposite. Well, I wish he would talk to some of my constituents and tell them where these northern allowances are.

No, I know of some government people who get a northern allowance. I believe MTS does. I could be wrong, but I believe Hydro does as well. And that probably accounts for 10 or 15 percent of the work force in my area. Do the rest of the people get northern allowance? Well, no, Mr. Speaker. If they get any benefits, the Federal Government is going to tax them anyway. But, according to members opposite, we get these northern benefits, so we can afford to pay more and our concerns about high airfares, or high gasoline prices, or high food prices, those concerns are not worth raising in the Legislature. That I think is a fair statement from the comments I've heard off the record.

You know, what annoys me is, not only do they come up with that, they even try to justify it. One concern in my area is the high price of gasoline. I've heard members on the other side justify that. I remember one member in debate in this House justified the fact that we, in the North, pay away more than just transportation difference between the south, that's two cents a litre. We pay 10 cents a litre more. Go to Thompson today, it's 10 cents a litre more. In the outlying communities, it's a hell of a lot more than that. They say, well that's okay, that's the way the system operates, that's just too bad. Well, that's not what people in Thompson say, and it's not just New Democrats in Thompson, it's pretty well everybody. They're concerned about issues like this. They're looking to this Assembly for discussion and action on those issues, and they're not getting it from this opposition.

You know, I think what kind of struck me the most was when I was lobbying for Destination Manitoba funding for a ski proposal in my area, I remember some of the heckling I got on that, almost as if: "oh, you guys up North." In fact, one member said, "who wants to go up North and ski anyway?" That was the basic tenor of his comments. It's just so typical of the attitude members opposite have.

They seem to think that you can put us in a nice stereotypical straightjacket up in the North. You know, we make good miners, or we make good foresters, we might even be allowed to work on a Hydro site once in a while, but that's the extent of it, that's pretty well the extent of it. When it comes to tourism, for example, who wants to go to the North. Well I've got news for them. Drive up and down Hwy. 6 and Hwy. 391 and you'll see who wants to go North. There are a lot of American tourists up there, one hell of a lot. Well, one says to ski. One member opposite questions whether anybody is going to travel to Thompson to ski. Well, I've got news for that member. With that grant, that \$178,000 Destination Manitoba grant and the \$300,000 raised in Thompson, you're going to see development

on that ski hill. You're going to see people coming from all areas of this province and from other areas of the country as well to ski in Thompson.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

MR. S. ASHTON: Well, the member opposite obviously does not like the fact that Thompson is getting \$178,000 from Destination Manitoba. I know, when I was lobbying for it a couple of years ago a couple of members opposite didn't appreciate it. But like I said, some of this is on the record, some of it is not on the record, but those members opposite, I think they should be a little more sympathetic. I've heard talk from some of them about western alienation and it's there, and it's there for some good reasons. If they can understand why the west is alienated, why can't they understand why the North gets alienated too sometimes? Why can't they understand that? And we're not mad at the east, we're mad at them, but they just don't understand. If they did, they'd be asking some questions. They'd be probing this government. They'd be pushing us and pushing us and pushing us to do better in the North. They'd be doing that. That's what I do on behalf of my constituents. As a government member I do it sometimes in this Chamber and a lot of times at government meetings, private meetings with Ministers.

That's the way the system operates. Opposition members have much more latitude in that area. It's generally accepted that opposition members will ask more questions, that's their role to ask questions, to probe.

But in the area of the North, a whole spectrum of northern issues, they are simply not doing it. They are bankrupt opposition as far as the North is concerned. Is it just the North? Well, I think if you look at the types of questions, the types of issues that they've raised, you'll see it's whole groups of Manitobans, it's whole groups of Manitobans we're being ignored by. You know, they take care of their own, whether it be the regional constituency, or in the case of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition who keeps saying that he wants to take out rent controls, they take care of their friends too. Not the majority of Manitobans, 80 percent want rent controls, but because they're supporters . . .

MR. F. JOHNSTON: When did he say that?

MR. S. ASHTON: Well the Member for Sturgeon Creek asks, when did he say it? I can show him when he said he is against rent controls. I can show you where he said in this House that he wants the tax tenants to pay for rent controls. He said it last Session. He said it the Session before. He said it right in this Chamber. He said we're taking away freedom by having rent controls. He said that. This is the same Leader of the Opposition who also said, we're taking away freedom by having motorcycle helmets and seat belt use made mandatory. The same Leader of the Opposition who voted for it and now talks against it. But, as I said, they're taking care of some groups. They are raising some concerns. They're doing that.

But whole other areas, let's talk, for example, educational issues, issues facing young people. That's another area. You know, we have an education critic

who doesn't get up in this House and say, he's concerned about one of the issues now. The fact that the U of W has been trying to increase tuition fees over and above the 10 percent guideline figures. Why would he not do that? It would seem to me a perfect opportunity to get up and raise a concern in this House which is certainly expressed to me when I was meeting with some student union representatives just recently. They said it was a concern.

There's a reason why. The education critic of the opposition, if he had his way, he'd probably double tuition fees. That is what he's saying in his policies. He wants to move tuition fees support of the educational process to 25 percent of the expenditures, that would double tuition fees. So, it's obvious why he's not raising concerns such as that.

How about other concerns? I go out and people are concerned about budget restraint at universities. Do I hear anything about that in this Chamber? Well, no, and it's obvious why. It's because the education critic opposite, he would cut them back, he would raise tuition fees. After all, that is what his government, although he was not a member at that time - I should mention that in all fairness to him - but the previous Conservative Government, that was their philosophy. So, you have there a whole other group of Manitobans who are just ignored by the opposition. Then you get into some areas where they're not really saying too much. They make a lot of bluster, but they're not really saying anything.

Let's look at the area of jobs. You know, they've been so critical of the Jobs Fund, they've been so critical of it. Does anybody remember how they voted in this Assembly on Jobs Fund? Does anybody? Well, the Minister of Natural Resources remembers. — (Interjection) — The Member for Sturgeon Creek says, "They had to." Of course they had to. The Jobs Fund is creating jobs. It's creating jobs for thousands of Manitobans. For them now to get up and call it a "fraud fund," Mr. Speaker, that's totally inaccurate. Just ask the thousands of Manitobans who are being employed at the present time.

They criticize the Jobs Fund, but as I say, it's a bit of a smoke screen really because what do they propose instead? Do we hear anything different that they have a different kind of jobs creation program? What would they propose? That's a question that is never answered.

It's much the same with their so-called criticisms of some of the recent long-term developments that have been announced by the Minister of Energy and Mines. Developments that could lead to literally thousands of jobs in Manitoba. I've heard a few different threads of a criticism, if you could call it that. The last five minutes of the Member for Pembina's speech contained a few criticisms. I believe there were a few illusions by the Member from Lakeside.

One thing they say, Mr. Speaker, is they say, "Oh well, these agreements are in 1993, they're in the 1990's." As if, well that may be okay, but that's some distance on. — (Interjection) — The Member for Concordia has just hit the nail right on the head. You can't build a hydro plant without that, without planning ahead in the future. You can't build a generating station, you can't do it. We'll get to what they've been telling us in a minute, we'll get to that.

It makes sense, if you look at it. Today the announcement is 500 megawatts. That's close to one-

half the capacity of Limestone. There's also increase in domestic demand, which would require that we construct Limestone in the 1990's based strictly on domestic demand. Does it not make sense that that announcement today, signed, sealed and delivered as it was, would lead to the resumption of the construction of Limestone?

Well, maybe. This is where the NDP and the Conservatives begin to part company substantially. — (Interjection) — He says, "Maybe." The member opposite say, "Maybe." You know the former Energy Minister, Don Craik, when the NSP sale was first announced, he didn't say, "Maybe," he said, "No." He said, "This did not justify the resumption of Limestone." This is where we start to part company somewhat from the Tories.

I started running that through my mind. I was trying to figure out how these Tories could be against the Hydro construction. I looked at it. Certainly when they were in office not much happened, but okay, we'll consider the fact that there was declining demand at that time. We'll look at that. We'll give them the benefit of the doubt there, but let's look at the criticisms that they made of the Schreyer Government.

What did they say about the Schreyer Government? They said that the Schreyer Government overbuilt Hydro capacity. They said '78, '79; they said back in the '70's. In other words, Mr. Speaker, if they'd been in government we wouldn't have built Jenpeg. They wouldn't have built Jenpeg or God knows what else. They wouldn't, Mr. Speaker, because that is where they have a different policy from the NDP, they part company from us.

When the Schreyer administration was in government in Manitoba for eight years, things were really happening in this province, things were really happening. Ask Manitobans about that. Ask them what is the No. 1 thing they remember about the Schreyer Government. I'll tell you what they remember in the north. They remember, under the Schreyer Government, things were happening. There was Hydro, there were people moving in the North, our communities were growing. They remember when you guys got in, you shut the entire North down; with your cutbacks, you shut it down.

They should look now, Mr. Speaker, at the comments you are making today on the developments we've announced, because what it is, it's the same thing you argued then. It's the same thing you did in government. You're against developing Hydro as a prime mover of economic development in Manitoba; that is what Don Craik said. The Member for Sturgeon Creek says, "Maybe, maybe, maybe we'll construct."

Mr. Speaker, I think that record will show over the next few months there's going to be no maybe's from this government. It's going to be, we're going to do it, we're moving things. So, as I said, they start to go somewhat apart here.

Let's go a little bit further. One other criticism we hear from the Tories is they say, "Well, on the one hand they're against what we're doing, but then again they were almost doing what we're doing now anyway." We've heard that. We heard the Leader of the Opposition say something about, "Oh, it's a feeling of *deja vu*." Right? We heard that. *Deja vu* what? Where was the 500 megawatt power sale signed, sealed and delivered? There was none. Today in question Perpod

somebody referred to what you were working on as hypothetical and that's exactly what you had. You had a series of hypothetical developments. That's why people didn't take you very seriously in the election when you were going around crowing about all these major developments. They were hypothetical developments. You tried to push them through; you tried to make them more than they were, because you were tied into an election within months and it didn't work. That's where it's different. They're trying to accuse us of the same. We just heard it from the Member for Pembina. The Member for Pembina said that the NSP power sale today was political.

Mr. Speaker, there is not going to be an election in this province in the next few months, not even within a year. There's not going to be an election. An election is quite a considerable distance off. This government has more than enough time to work on the Western Area Power Authority power sale, the Alcoa deal, the potash mine. We know it, Manitobans know it and you know it too. As much as you can try and create the scenario that we are rushing this in for political reasons, you know that's not true. You know it's not true. When we announce a \$3 billion power sale; signed, sealed and delivered, which can lead to \$1.7 billion profit, is that a last minute desperate election-oriented gimmick? No, Mr. Speaker, that's responsible negotiations, that's responsible development.

They don't like it. They don't like it. According to the speeches we heard in the last session, the government should have just rolled over and died and then, bang, these guys would be in government and then all their dreams would come true. You could see each member trying to create this dream cabinet portfolio they'd like to occupy. You could just see it, the ambition come steaming out of their ears. You could see it, Mr. Speaker. Then came the announcement of the NSP Letter of Intent. You should have seen the looks on their faces. They were ashen. How could this happen? They've created this whole scenario in their mind. They really believe their own rhetoric, that we were floundering, that we couldn't get long-term economic development in this province. We proved them wrong.

Look at their reaction today. They were ashen again. There was no applause. They did not applaud. — (Interjection) — Oh great day, the member opposite says a great day, very cynically. You should have seen the look on their faces when we announced the WAPA deal, when we announced that we're negotiating with Alcoa or with the potash mine. You should have seen the looks on their faces. But you know, they keep saying that they somehow almost had the same thing. Well, there's an obvious difference as I said. We're not close to an election in that sense, we've got time to manoeuvre, we have time to make decisions with the best interest of Manitobans at hand.

You know, this is where their argument completely collapses when it comes to these deals. On the one hand, they say that what we're doing is such a bad thing. That's what they're saying. They're saying, they don't want it. They're saying they don't want Hydro construction again. Oh, except the Member for Sturgeon Creek; he says maybe. I give him credit. But they say, on the other hand, that what we're doing is almost like what they were doing before.

What is consistent about that? Well, absolutely nothing. In fact, when you compare what we came up with against what they've come up with, you compare conditions, you compare magnitude, you compare cost protection; you'll find that we've come out with far better deals. You know, I could say that that's because we have an NDP Government and its related strictly to the political parties. That could be the case, Mr. Speaker.

There could be another explanation too. There could be a series of explanations. The No. 1 being that they just simply didn't have the time to get a lot of these things pulled together. They had to scramble because they did face an election. I would suspect that's more of it. Perhaps given the time, they could've come up with better deals.

I don't criticize what they were doing then, I really don't criticize what they did in '81. The things they were working on recognized the competitive advantage Manitoba has, which is Hydro power, recognized that. I'm not getting up and saying that it was terrible that they even thought of a Western Power Grid or bringing in Alcan or developing a potash mine. That makes sense. There was a comparative advantage for Manitoba in those areas, but what we're really looking at is comparing what we are doing now with a stringent set of questions about conditions and about protection in that. That's what we're really looking at, whether this is a good deal or not.

Because we're selling to Northern States Power is not necessarily good or bad in and as of itself. The key question should be the conditions of that contract. This is where I get back once again to that bottom line of the opposition, that is their failure, their complete failure on this and many other issues that mount a credible opposition.

The opposition had their chance with the grievances today, to really put their concerns on the record. Instead they come up with inconsistencies; they come up with totally phony arguments; they come up with smoke screens; they come up with political rhetoric; and they don't deal with the issues.

So the bottom line is the irrelevance, the irrelevance of this place, when members of this House talk about bear-baiting; ramble on about their own pet personality conflicts in this Chamber, because we hear that enough; when they trot out the old tired political rhetoric about the good guys and the bad guys and all that sort of political hogwash we get time and time again.

You know it's really unfortunate, because when I talk to people in my constituency, I hear this alienation that has come up. I say to myself, that really it shouldn't happen. When I talk to people, more than half who really don't care what happens in this place, who have gotten so cynical that they just really don't care what happens in the Legislature or in Parliament. That saddens me.

We have a tremendous system. We can get up and debate what's going to happen with the government. The government can make its proposals and the opposition can get up and make its proposals. It can criticize the government, it can make proposals of its own. Many systems in this world you can't do that. The majority of countries today in this world, you probably won't get any of this kind of debate, this potential.

When you get down to it, the sad part of what we're doing is that we have such a privilege in Manitoba to

be able to do that and we're wasting it. We're wasting it on irrelevancies. The best mark of that is the alienation that is out there. The sense that people have that what we're doing in this Chamber is irrelevant to their daily lives.

Given the fact that it is such a privilege, I would really urge members opposite, all Members of this House, to get back to the relevant things, to forget this rhetoric, to forget this talk of personalities, and to forget some of these totally irrelevant issues. This is a Chamber for discussing real issues of concern. They can be small issues. Many people in my area have comparatively small concerns. They have a place to be heard here too. But the tie that brings it all together is the relevance. How relevant are we finding what is happening here today? We have one person in the press gallery, we have half-a-dozen people in the public galleries. — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, the Member for Sturgeon Creek suggests closing up the galleries. Well, pardon me, he says what do you want to do, close up the galleries. I want to open the galleries. I want to open up this system in here. I want people to be drawn here by the relevance of debate in this House, not driven out of here by totally irrelevant talk about bear bait, and this from the man who wants to separate from Canada if the Liberals win the next election.

MR. B. RANSOM: Do you realize there are more people out there concerned about bear baiting, than your theories of monetarism?

MR. S. ASHTON: Well Mr. Speaker, we hear now from the Member for Turtle Mountain, who supports the fact that we should spend an entire day debating bear baiting. — (Interjection) — Well, that's basically what he was saying. He wouldn't want Private Members' Hour to discuss high interest rates would he? No, that's what he's saying. He doesn't want to discuss that. He doesn't want to do that and his colleagues don't want to talk about issues of concern to my constituents.

Well, I can make more appeals, but I don't think it's going to do any good. I've seen what has happened in this Chamber in two-and-a-half years to know enough. They're going to continue on their own merry ways, they're going to make the same speeches; they're going to appeal to their same small constituent groups, their friends. That's what they're going to do, they're going to talk for their friends.

It's time they started talking for the broader constituency of this province. Talk about the North. Take up the challenge. You may not understand that much about it right now in what's happening in the North. Go up to the North. Check into it. Go up there. Start talking to people about the issues.

You know, I would feel a lot more comfortable if this government was put on the spot more times by the opposition in that area, because I remember how good an opposition the NDP was between '77 and 81. The Member for Churchill - you remember the Member for Churchill, you comment on the statements he made. You still remember him. He had an impact. He represented his constituents, and so did the other members of the northern caucus. They spoke for the North.

Mr. Speaker, I bring up the North because that is the area I know best. That's the area where I grew up,

and that's the area where my family lives. It means a lot to me, the future development of that area. There are ways in which we can help. Let's talk about Hydro development and one stage further, let's talk about northern preference. I think we need northern preference for hiring on Hydro work. We need tight control over it, because in the past there was a policy which just took one loophole for you to drive a truck through it.

We need northern preference. We need to get northern contractors doing work on that site. There's going to be billions of dollars of work, because this government is going to say, yes, not maybe. There's going to be a billion dollars of work. Let's make sure it stays with some of my constituents. Let's work on some of the things that have been talked about for 15 and 20 and 25 years in the North, some of the inadequate facilities that we have, some of the high-costs of living we face up there.

You know, I have my ideas on the way to solve that. I'd like to hear their ideas. As an opposition, surely they must have some idea of how to tackle these concerns in the North. Surely they must, surely there must be at least one person who can get up and ask them questions, who can put this government on the spot.

I believe that the strength of our parliamentary system is as much in the strength of our oppositions as it is in our governments. Nothing can beat a government being challenged by a good opposition.

Mr. Speaker, we don't have that at the present time. Certainly, in issues relating to the North, what challenges have you put out in terms of the North? You haven't asked any questions. Mr. Speaker, how can they challenge what we're doing in the North, if they don't ask questions, they don't have any opinions, they don't have any policies. They don't know anything about what's going on in the North.

I've noted some of the other areas where they've totally neglected to raise concerns and I've noted some of the other areas where they've put up that old smoke screen. For example, in terms of job creation. — (Interjection) — Well let's consider that when we're considering grievances. Let's consider that. You know, if we can't, in a forum such as this in 40 minutes, where you can indicate your grievance or your frustration with what is going on, if you can't bring that down to relevancy then there's no hope.

You have the opportunity to say anything. You can raise the issues of concerns of my constituents to your constituents, but you're choosing to raise bear bait. You're choosing to raise that. You're choosing to trot out the same rhetoric that you brought out time-and-time again and you know, I've just about had it up to here. I think if my constituents could see what goes on in days such as this, they'd just shake their head. They would just shake their head and, I'm sure, so would the average Manitoban.

That's the bottom of line of it, as I said, is relevancy. Let's get back to relevancy. We have a motion before us to go into the Supply, to discuss two major departments, Mr. Speaker, of government at this point in time. Let's get on with it. Let's discuss real issues of concern to Manitobans and not waste the time of the legislators of this province and the people of Manitoba with the same irrelevancies that we've heard day in and day out in this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Will the honourable member permit a question?

A MEMBER: Sure he will.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll try to do the two very quickly. Does the member know how many grievances a member is allowed in this House per year, and does he not believe that a member has the right, with his grievance, to discuss something that is concern within his constituency, the same as you just discussed your constituency? I might say, Mr. Speaker, we just had dinner with the Member for Roblin, in celebrating his 70th birthday and if you become half the member he is, I'll say something - you'll be lucky.

MR. S. ASHTON: You have a right, Mr. Speaker, you also have a responsibility I think to raise matters of relevance, and as I said, I indicated no personal criticism of the member. In fact I've made that quite specific and I, Mr. Speaker, unlike others, don't like getting into personality conflicts and insults. You know I wish that member the best, as much as anybody else.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?
The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DREIDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to take this opportunity that our regulations allow to put my grievance forward in this House. I find it sort of interesting that we've had quite a number of members speaking on grievances today and the provision is there, that everybody who feels they have some concerns, they can put on the record. The procedure I think has normally been used where a member of the opposition has some concerns, some grievances that he wants to relate to the government and put it on the record and, from time to time, the government members would then reply. What we've here, though, is a regulative exchange, almost like a Budget Debate or a Throne Speech Debate, and interestingly enough, when the first members come up with a grievance in this Session, as the Minister of Cultural Affairs, who grieved against the opposition for not lauding some of the programs of government, and I find that very interesting.

Then the other thing . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: The other thing, Mr. Speaker, I find very interesting that the Member for Thompson rails to the opposition about using their opportunity to bring forward their grievances. He criticized - he said it's a waste of time, Mr. Speaker, for members to debate in this House and he made fun, as was illustrated already by the Member for Sturgeon Creek, about the Member for Roblin-Russell about grieving about his problem with bears.

At the same time, in contradiction, he said he should have the right to bring forward his little problems, his

little grievances into the House, and criticizes us for not supporting that. Still when the Member for Roblin-Russell, who incidentally will be celebrating his 70th birthday on Saturday, who has been here almost 20 years - that Member for Thompson, in his first term here, is going to criticize that member for bringing forward a major concern.

Actually I find that an insult to the Member for Roblin-Russell, because the Member for Roblin-Russell has raised that issue many many times with the Minister of Natural Resources, and part of my grievance today will be against the Minister of Natural Resources for other issues. But the Member for Roblin-Russell has raised it many times in questions and felt compelled, because to him and his constituents it is a major problem, still the Member for Thompson says no, he's making light of it. But he says, my problems in the North, those are the ones that are important, but the Member for Roblin-Russell, we shouldn't worry about that.

I find it very interesting, Mr. Speaker, the comments that were made. Some of his comments I think merited some thought, but his opening remarks and his closing remarks I thought, when he criticized what goes on in this House, and he contributed a full 40 minutes to doing the same thing, I find that sort of amusing.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, because we have the opportunity to voice our grievances here, I have various concerns that I want to bring forward about the action or lack of action of this government. I'd like to start off, as I indicated, with the Minister of Natural Resources. We've had a lot of activity here, Mr. Speaker, and a promotion by the government people saying they are listening to people. They are listening to people and maybe they are listening to people, but after they've listened to them, they still do exactly what they want. They talk of consultation and I have all kinds of areas that I can illustrate the kind of consultation. They listen to the people, then they said we have consulted and go and do the exact opposite.

One of the areas that I want to illustrate is establishment of the wilderness areas. — (Interjection) — Yes we're going back to that and I'm glad that the Member for Inkster, who is the personal advisor to the Minister of Natural Resources, is here as well. Mr. Speaker, that high shrill voice that comes across there, sort of throws me off a little bit, because I do my fair share of that too.

But that is part of my grievance, the advice that the Minister of Natural Resources is getting from the Member for Inkster, and this is exactly what happened in the establishment of that wilderness area, the Lake Mantario area, for non-mechanical use as it is designated now. Because I had the occasion - I mentioned this before in the House - to go out there this last winter when there was hundreds of people out there. They wanted the Minister to come out and discuss with them, because exactly at that time when we were out there, mechanical restrictions were put on. The Minister has met with these people. He knows their concerns. He knows the need for that area, that there is no need for the mechanical restrictions, and that's what I mean about listening. They say they consult and then they do exactly as they please.

Mr. Speaker, I have yet to find out from the Minister of Natural Resources who has been demanding these

kind of designations that they have. Because the purpose that it will serve - and I've served notice to the Minister of Natural Resources - that we want to know how many people have made use of these designated areas where non-mechanical use has been placed and now he's proceeding and doing the same thing with the Atikaki Park area, if I'm correct. Geographically it's a very very big area. It includes the Bloodvein Rivers, very good fishing rivers; again, controlled mechanical access will not be allowed, and it is a chosen few environmentalists that will make use of it. That is what I say. The Minister of Natural Resources - my biggest criticism is the source of his advice - that shrill voice that always keeps whispering in his ear. Maybe because of the shrillness of the voice is why he's giving in to that member, because he's getting bad advice.

The other thing is, the Member for Thompson was concerned about us not asking questions about the North. Well, there are many people in these designated areas or supposedly proposed designated areas where the mining companies are very concerned. I have endless letters where they have indicated, do not put a mechanical restriction on there. So the Minister proceeds to do that, and that is just part of my problem with this Minister.

The other thing, he says we're listening to people. Well, how many people from all sources of Manitoba have told this Minister do something about poaching? What we have - we have rumours that we are going to control the sports hunter again, and that supposedly is supposed to correct the poaching aspect of it. The sports hunter has never been the poaching problem. The sports hunter is not the one that does nightlighting. The sports hunter is not the one that hunts out of season. That is the individual, Mr. Speaker, that pays for his licence, is a proper hunter and enjoys the outdoors, as it is supposed to be done. That is not the individual who is creating the problem.

So the Minister is proceeding again; he set up all kinds of road blocks for the sports hunters. I anticipate and I will be raising some questions with him in the very near future. I might as well indicate to him what his position is in terms of live bait fishing in this province. He's got real problems in his hand with that.

But, Mr. Speaker, when people phone me about some of the problems with this Minister, they tell me that he does not listen. Mr. Speaker, they tell me that he's arrogant and that he is snippy and that he does not listen. He doesn't give them the time of day, rushes him out and does exactly as he wants to do.

I suggested to him the other day, Mr. Speaker, that he should consult with the wildlife associations. He should consult with all the wildlife associations, these are people who are involved with volunteer work and organizations to try and enhance wildlife. He doesn't do that, Mr. Speaker. He has that whispering voice that is guiding him and that is going to be the downfall of this Minister, because right now, Mr. Speaker, many of our people - sportsmen, hunters, fishermen - they are very upset with this Minister. In fact, if there was a vote taken with all of the people who are involved with sport hunting and fishing, I think the Minister would come up with less than 1 percent, and it is because of his attitude, Mr. Speaker. He has a very arrogant attitude with the people he is dealing with and it aggravates those people.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister asks whether that is what my constituents tell me. No, Mr. Speaker, that is from a lot of phone calls that I get from all over Manitoba tell me. It is not my constituents. — (Interjection) — You can do that any time you want, Mr. Minister, I'd be very pleased if you would. But that is sort of the attitude, Mr. Speaker, of what has happened with this government.

I have picked on the Minister of Natural Resources because I am the critic of that department. I maybe have more instances that I could illustrate under that department, but, Mr. Speaker, that is the way it is going with this government in all their aspects. Almost all the Ministers are that way. I find it interesting that this Minister has the kind of clout that he has within the Cabinet because the Minister responsible for Tourism, who is involved in the Lake Manitoba area, in his riding, in his constituency, is getting tremendous flack. The tourist people are very upset with the designation and this is in the Minister of Tourism's own riding and the Minister of Natural Resources still proceeds to do it and gets it through Cabinet.

I find it interesting, very interesting, and it is this kind of attitude that prevails with this government. If they have any doubts about it, they know what the public of Manitoba feels about them at the present time. They have been making a valiant effort in the last while; they have been announcing programs of various natures, deals that are being made. They have been coming up in their grievances and expounding what the government has done. The people of Manitoba are not buying it; they're not happy with this government. We are marking time. The people of Manitoba are marking time.

We kiddingly say sometimes, Mr. Speaker, "call an election." But there is a lot of truth in that, because if they would call an election now there would be very few members that would be left on that side because of the feeling of the public at the present time. That stems back - and the Member for Pembina alluded to that to some degree - when we had the issue about the French language, when we had hearings throughout, and the government knew, virtually knew, that almost 80 percent of the people were opposed to it and the Attorney-General says, so what? He says it doesn't make any difference, we're proceeding on our course. That is what has aggravated the people of Manitoba. This government that says they listen to the people of Manitoba have alienated the people because they are not responding to the wishes of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, there are other areas that I have concern about. The Member for Thompson said, "nobody cares about the North." Well, I would like to talk about the south and the treatment of this government of the people in southern Manitoba, which is the main economic base in this province, especially the agricultural base, which is the main industry in the province, that is in dire trouble at the present time. What is this government doing in terms of - let's talk about highways for a minute. The Member for Pembina also alluded to highways. But our system of roads, of PRs and PTHs is in a terrible mess. It is. Because there is less and less money spent, especially in the southern area.

If we compare the dollars spent, if we split the province in half, the dollar spent in the North and in

the developed south, it would be interesting to see what would happen, because I have for the second year in a row one small stretch of road built in my area. My area starts at the Floodway; it's a big L-shaped area. The amount of roads, I don't have a figure on the mileage, I wish I had, and one 7.4 stretch that is going to be graded and gravelled and that shows where their priority lies with roads.

With agriculture, we've seen that. They pay lip service; they talk about all the great things they've done for the farm economy. It does not reflect. Mr. Speaker, if they were doing such a good job for the farm community, why don't they have more members representing farm communities? - because it is lip service that they're giving. They do not have their heart in it. The same thing applies again to the Minister of Natural Resources and these are three major areas, Mr. Speaker, that affect the rural area: one is Highways, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Natural Resources.

When we look at what is happening in drainage in the province in the agricultural community, it's pathetic. It is. Any of the drainage projects that were designated for this year, and they were almost forced into it because of the federal-provincial Agro-Man Value-Added Crop Agreements. Those are the projects. If they do not complete them this year, that money is lost, and that is why they're on the program and very little else. But it is that kind of attitude towards the things that affect the rural constituencies that bother us and bother the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, it isn't always pleasant to just be critical all the time, but I think our role as opposition to some degree, we have to look at what the government is doing. When the Minister of Culture got up, and grieved against the opposition for not clapping her hands, when they made an announcement - they have something like 30-some-odd members there - that if they can't laud their own programs, if they have to rely on the opposition to promote their programs so that they get press, then there is something very wrong with those programs, isn't there? I find it very interesting.

What has happened, Mr. Speaker, in the short time that this government has been in? It is a short time, it's about two-and-a-half years I guess. It seems like a long time. Well, what has happened in terms of promoting the economy of this province?

We've seen a payroll tax imposed on the people of Manitoba. I recall so distinctly the glee with which the Minister of Finance at that time introduced it, because he felt that they'd done something tremendous, they hadn't raised the sales tax. They'd brought in this one-and-a-half payroll tax.

In retrospect, Mr. Speaker, looking back they realize they made a mistake with that tax. That is why in this year's Budget, they've already removed a certain portion of that. Mr. Speaker, it is my prediction that before they call an election that they will remove that payroll tax altogether. It is my personal prediction because politically, it is a very unsavory type of tax.

Interestingly enough, the next year they had to come back and raise the sales tax by 1 percent. Other things that affect the attitude, for example, of the government towards the rural area - well it doesn't just affect the rural area, it affects every Manitoban - the removal of the Hydro freeze. Since that time, we've had a 16 percent increase in Hydro rates.

If there is a certain amount of apprehension by members on this side about some of these energy deals, Hydro deals, that are being proposed by the Government of the Day, and if we look at the history of what has happened during the Schreyer years and the cost of Hydro during those years, Mr. Speaker, I don't think they should be surprised if we're a little apprehensive and critical and want some answers, because we envision that possibly the Hydro rates are going to go skyrocketing again, that the people of Manitoba will be bearing the brunt of these deals that are being made.

When we talk of deals that are going to be effective nine years from now, a lot of things can happen in nine years. I personally think it is to some degree a political ploy. The fact that they talk of starting up Limestone - it will be interesting when we deal in committee. In the last two years the committee dealing with Hydro has indicated that in terms of normal usage, by the year 1992 there will be requirements for possibly Limestone to be built or to be in place.

I also indicated to the committee that by 1988 or 1987 if they started then, a five-year span would be adequate to bring this Limestone onstream. Now this deal that they're talking about that was announced today starts taking place in 1993. Now what would be the need for starting up Limestone prior to 1987? An interesting question - I'm sure that my colleagues, who are very capable of pursuing this later on, the committee will proceed with.

Mr Speaker, there's endless things that we can talk about, even in the two-and-a-half years, of what has happened and not happened.

It is my impression, Mr. Speaker, by the actions of the government in the last while, that it is the actions of a desperate government. They know the people are not happy with them; they're trying to change it around. We see that, Mr Speaker, by the fact that the Premier is now touring the province more extensively than ever before, trying to bring favour back to the party.

I think the damage has been done, I think it has been done. I think they have a long ways to go before they'll win that favour back. I don't think they'll get it back. I don't think they will.

If members are honestly going to look at each other and assess the situation, the speeches that have been coming forward are made with the basis and intent of trying to turn things around in terms of the public view, but they're economic policies do not make it appear so.

I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, when we were in government and we were criticized extensively about the restraint program, cutbacks, restraint. Now when we've gone through the Estimates, finally finally, I think it started to sink in. In going through the Estimates, of course there is a two-sided thing to this thing, but almost invariably all the line-by-line departments are down, except in the administrative end of it where they plugged it with their personal political supporters, but all the rest of it is down.

Now two things, of course: they realize financially that they've made a bad mistake, the deficit is going up. The other thing is that it's a shuffle game with moving money into the Jobs Fund so that they make political decisions as to where it goes.

Then the Minister of Culture gets up and criticizes the opposition for not lauding their programs. The one

thing about this system is that it allows scrutiny of what happens. They can squirm and try to hide many things - it all comes out in the wash. It all comes out in the wash as will these deals that they're telling us about.

Mr. Speaker, there's so many areas as I indicated, the attitude of the Attorney-General and I think the Member for Pembina covered that quite extensively in terms of his attitude. The Member for Pembina pleaded for the members and the backbenchers to get involved and find our what your Ministers are doing. I would encourage that as well, because they accept blindly, it seems, anything that is presented in terms of the front bench of the Cabinet, and then afterwards find out, to their embarrassment, that it is a mistake. As I indicated before, Mr. Speaker, it all comes out in the end.

Mr. Speaker, I've used a grievance before in the seven years that I've been here. It was these things that I wanted to put on record. One always has the opportunity at various times to do that, but I felt strongly about some of these issues. Irregardless of what the Member for Thompson says about it being a waste of time, I think the members that have spoken on grievances from this side have brought out concerns, valid concerns, some positive suggestions, and I for one feel that it is not a waste of time. I feel that the Member for Thompson owes an apology to the Member for Roblin-Russell, who has been serving this Legislature for many, many years.

He's embarrassed the Member for Roblin-Russell with his comments. He's degraded him calling his problems small. As I indicated before and then saying, well his problems should be debated here, but nobody elses.

It is these kinds of things, Mr. Speaker, that make the opposition sometimes chaffy a bit. That is why we lash out at government from time-to-time. No. 1, because it is our responsibility and also because we can see where the government is going wrong. We feel we have to draw it to their attention from time-to-time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?
The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer some of my comments in this what has become virtually today, a day of grievances, a day of debate on many different topics. Some of the comments referred to by the opposition today have been somewhat enlightening, somewhat through embitterment, I think, on the success that our government has had, the success on the economic fronts, success on the environmental front, the success on job creation, the success that we have been working for for the past couple of years so that the people of Manitoba will have a more secure future.

Those more secure futures belong not to just people in our constituencies, the New Democratic Party constituencies, but equally to constituents of the members opposite. Mr. Speaker, it gets rather tiring, I guess - and maybe I'm being a bit defensive here - to have continual bombasts by the members opposite towards our government on numerous issues and towards Manitobans as well.

There is a role for the opposition and it's an essential role in our parliamentary process. It is not always to

be positive to government to say the very least but, Mr. Speaker, it is not to run around blindly and call white black day in and day out. It is not to run and be casters of doom, saying everything is falling apart, concentrating - fabricating, I should say, not concentrating - because there aren't very many negative issues to concentrate on. The few areas, as the Member for Thompson picked out, where the government is potentially somewhat vulnerable or has not been able to do as much as we would like to do, the members of the opposite have been mum.

There is a role for constructive criticism and that constructive criticism goes far beyond personal attacks. Unfortunately, I think when they lower themselves to the tactics they have used this past number of months, the past two-and-a-half years actually, is going to give them no choice but to be in perpetual opposition. — (Interjection) — Yes, I think the Member for Morris will find this quite interesting. It will be very much worth his while to sit and listen to some rational debate. — (Interjection) — Yes, I'm very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to have the blessing of the Member for Sturgeon Creek along with my efforts in being expressed here this evening.

The role of the opposition, above all else, in a democratic process where they are attempting to appeal to an electorate that is rational, an electorate that thinks, an electorate that likes to weigh choices, weigh alternatives, and they provide us with next to nothing but negative comments and negative statements. Very rarely do they offer any kind of alternatives for the electorate to be able to weigh the differences. They offer nothing, Mr. Speaker. They don't tell us what their programs are. The only members, and I give the Member for Emerson some credit in his constant attacks against us in environmental and natural resource issues, as it makes it quite clear as to the vast difference between our two parties, when one looks at environmental issues. Whether it's attacking the establishment and the preservation of wilderness areas or ecological reserves or even hiking trails - something as harmless as a hiking trail - and yet they get all upset, get up, make attacks, make repeated attacks on the government for trying to encourage the people of Manitoba to get out and to take advantage of and to use the tremendous areas that we have in this province.

One area I'd like to concentrate a little bit on here in the few minutes that I have this evening, is to — (Interjection) — well, the Member for Turtle Mountain talks of The Ecological Reserves Act. I believe he brought it in and I believe he will remember a meeting that I had with him when he was the Minister responsible for Natural Resources, when I was executive vice-president of the Manitoba Naturalist Society encouraging him to bring in an ecological reserves act. At that meeting we didn't know whether he was going to move ahead or not. I am very pleased he did move ahead, and I think that it is to the betterment in the future of Manitoba and the preservation of unique areas in our province. We and future generations shall benefit from that decision and from the application of that act and the establishment of ecological reserves.

More often than not, when we find out what the policies of the members opposite are, when they have slip-ups, when they come out in a moment of anger, when they're caught in between a few statements - which

they frequently are - and they holler out something towards what their own real gut feelings are and what the feelings one only can assess are the feelings of the Conservative Party.

If we look at issues such as women's issues, something that is of very much concern to us in this party, I would hope it would have been more a concern to members of the party opposite in addressing issues that have kept women in our society at a level and our economic aspects of our society and our economic participation of our society much behind their brothers. We on this side feel that is wrong. We on this side feel that the women should be able to participate in the work force as equal with men. We're not superior, by no such an imagination are we superior.

We have, last year, when we were discussing the Estimates of day care, the Member for Assiniboia making a comment - and I'm sorry, I don't have the exact quote here - but in general was that he didn't believe in day care. He thought there was too much in day care already, that in the good old days, women stayed at home and took care of the children and the man went out and was the breadwinner. The man was out and . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. D. SCOTT: . . . took in the bread for the family. That was what was important . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

The Honourable Member for Assiniboia on a point of order.

MR. R. NORDMAN: A point of order. I'd like the Member from Inkster to prove that I said that. As far as I'm concerned, I never ever made such a statement.

A MEMBER: Withdraw.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Withdraw, please.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member did not have a point of order, he might have had a point of explanation.

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I shall endeavour to go back through - unfortunately, I've sent my own personal copies of my Hansards off to be bound. I have it noted in those. When I get it back, or I'll try tomorrow even to go back to the committee meeting of last year when the Member for Assiniboia made those comments.

It's not unique in regard to housing. Even just back, not that terribly long ago, he made a comment in the House in regard to the role of the public in providing housing and making sure that there are good quality homes for all Manitobans, that we live in a society as advanced as ours is and that he feels that the public should not have some role in providing for good housing

provisions for its people. When he said at that stage, and I think I'm pretty close here, I said we didn't need any more subsidized housing, and he nods his head in concurrence there that a government in opposition, or an opposition in government, I should say, the Progressive Conservative Party in opposition, or if they were in government - unfortunately, I don't think they ever will be in government for a long time to come in the future because of their attitudes. But he said — (Interjection) — oh, don't say, "Don't stop us now." You used that once before and it didn't quite work. Not only to be stopped, but you ran into a brick wall and you're going to continue to run into brick walls because of policies such as yours against the role of the public in housing; that we should not be providing any kind of subsidies for the people of Manitoba to live in decent homes; to encourage them when interest rates are high, when houses become prohibitively expensive for the average Manitoban to move into, so that they don't want any kind of subsidy. They don't want low interest programs to encourage people to move into homes. They don't want public housing programs for the disadvantaged people in our society who cannot afford to go out and to spend the vast sums that are required to acquire one's own home.

We, in this party, believe that we have a responsibility towards providing the best possible shelter for our people and to encourage people towards their own home ownership as well; being in direct personal ownership of their own detached home, be it through co-operatives, be it through condominiums, whatever, for them to be able to have a very high quality of living in their home.

We had the Member for Morris say not too long ago, and I quote this in relation to education spending. We have members opposite always asking to spend more money, in particular, on ditches and on highways and that sort of thing, and bridges, but we don't very often have them asking for more money and for us to dedicate funds into areas that depend or will determine the future capacity of this province. Any government that does not invest in its use and invest in education so that the people of that province will progress with societies, domestic and internationally, that, my dear friends, will lead to a province, will lead to a state which is so far behind in the world that you end up in a desperate situation.

A government must invest in its future. It must invest in education. And we had the Member for Morris, the education critic, standing up and saying, Mr. Speaker, "I have never asked for more money in the area of education, not publicly, or privately, at no time." But he has asked, he has asked for those in the institutions of higher learning, in our universities, in the election campaign when he was running for the leadership of his party along with his companion R2-D2 stating that he felt, Mr. Speaker, that university students should have to pay 25 percent of the cost of education. I

understand that is something in the vicinity of three times to four times the tuition rates that they're now paying. Yet the Member for Morris wants to increase those that much higher.

Right now the students don't even pay 10 percent of the total cost of their education because it would be limited to an elite class of people to have education. That is what unfortunately the Conservatives in their perpetual pushing of more funding for private schools, the only area they want more funding it seems is for private schools, and for elite education for a very small number of people rather than for the population.

We have the Member for Turtle Mountain constantly talking about deficits. I understand, and I appreciate he has concerns on deficits. I have concerns on deficits. But why did the Member for Turtle Mountain run to an election in October of 1981 instead of facing up to a budget the following year? I tell you why, Mr. Speaker, because he saw the writing on the wall. He saw the deficit, his deficit, his party, his government that had rallied against deficits from '76 right through until 1980 and they continued to rally against deficits. They saw their own deficit going through the roof. There's no way that they, as a party of the right, as a party fighting deficits, as a party fighting against the role the government has in society, and particularly in an economic recession because it may add to the deficit of the Province of Manitoba.

We have him the other day talking about inflation and deficits. And he has yet to explain to members of this House why, when deficits have gone right through the roof in the United States compared to what they were four years or five years ago when the monetarists were squawking about deficits causing inflation, and when their deficits are something like five times what they were when they were making those forecasts four or five years ago the members opposite cannot explain to us why inflation is lower today. Mr. Speaker, it hurts us to have to put up sometimes with the statements that are made by members opposite, that reveal their true attitudes, be it towards minorities in our province, minorities, no matter what their color, and their attacks on those people, they're gleeful of statements as Mr. Enns made this morning.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, for us to make sure that tape is not erased so that we can, if the need be in future, hold that tape so that it can be listened to because I'm sure what the member said is on the interjection mikes, his slur against the Sikh community of this province. Mr. Speaker, this is the party that talks of democracy, the party opposite, and yet . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member's time has expired.

It being adjournment hour, this House is adjourned and will stand adjourned until 10:00 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).